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ABSTRACT

This review examines 20 journal articles and three papers related to the use of music and creative movement to teach language. The paper considers the evidence of a possible shift away from separating these arts from core subjects in the schools. Both historic and experimental field research is assessed in light of ideas found in Broudy (1990), Mead (1996), Pellegrini and Galda (1993), and Goolsby (1984). Advice to the practitioner takes the form of integrated, multi-disciplinary, or multiple intelligence programs by Campbell (1995), Burnaford (1993), Jacobs (1991), and others, including special education programs. Teacher training for integrated programs is evaluated by Leonhard (1990), Burnaford (1993) and Kite, Smucker, Steiner, and Bayne (1994). (Author)

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Abstract

This review examines 20 journal articles and three papers related to the use of music and creative movement to teach language. It considers the evidence of a possible shift away from separating these arts from core subjects in schools. Historic and experimental field research is assessed in light of a ideas found in Broudy (1990), Mead (1996) Pellegrini and Galda (1993) and Goolsby (1984). Advice to the practitioner takes the form of "integrated," "multi-disciplinary" or "multiple intelligence" programs by Campbell (1995), Burnaford (1993) and Jacobs (1991) and others, including special education programs. Teacher training for integrated programs is evaluated by Leonhard (1990), Burnaford (1993) and Kite, Smucker, Steiner and Bayne (1994) and others.

The Use of Music and Creative Movement as a Tool in Language Development in Elementary Children: A Review of Related Literature

In the past, schools have separated music and creative movement instruction from the core curriculum subject of language. This approach is changing with the new awareness of multiple intelligences and the whole language approach to learning.

In the area of whole language, Burnaford (1993) states that, "Much discussion is being devoted in current educational circles to the notion of integrating curricular areas in order to foster a sense of the relationships among subject and skills in the curriculum. In elementary education, such approaches may be known as "whole language" initiatives...." (p. 44). Goodman (1989) states that: "Whole language starts with the premise that the whole is more than the sum of its parts...." (p. 208.)

As the major proponent for multiple intelligence learning, Gardner (1991) calls for programs that "evoke the use of a range of intelligences" (p 204). Gardner describes music as one of the human intelligences. He also points to the value of movement as a function of learning calculus, siting demonstrations by researchers at the Technical Education Research Center (Gardner, 1992, p.409).

Are music and creative movement proper useful tools for language development? Are there programs that demonstrate the potential for music or creative movement or a combination of the two? Do these programs serve as successful pedagogical tools for language development in the elementary classroom?

The following review of related literature examines 20 journal articles and three papers that take as their subject some aspect of these questions.

Historic Research and Important Definitions

Ideally, a researcher should define the terms of a study and then present any suppositions in a hypothesis. A complete study backs up suppositions. It includes a review of the work of others in the past.

Very few of the articles in this review meet this standard. Mead (1996), Broudy (1990) and Goolsby (1984) provide insights into music and aesthetic education. Broudy and Goolsby place their ideas within the context of the history of education.

Mead's (1996) article discusses the life work of Emile Jaques Dalcroze, a Swiss musician and inventor of Dalcroze Eurhythmics. The term "Eurhythmics" is of interest because its meaning comes close to describing the classical Greek concept of music that included melody, movement and language. Mead defines Dalcroze's work this way: "He called this study of music through movement 'eurythmics' from the Greek roots *eu* and *rythmos*, that mean "good flow" or "good movement."(p. 38.) Mead describes Dalcroze's work with Eurhythmics as an attempt to sharpen a child's perception and sensitivity to timing, articulation and phrasing, all key elements of both music and language. In fact, she suggests Dalcroze sought to merge music and movement into a kind of language, one that relates back to the ancient Greek ideal of music. Her article goes on to offer a few examples of the impact of Dalcroze's eurythmics on modern education, but she offers only cursory examples and not substantial studies.

Broudy (1990) defines the study of music and examines the role of music education in western history. He cites Eby and Arrowood (1940) for an insight into the classical Greek concept of music: "What they called "music"...was an intimate union of melody, verse, and dance, so that the particular emotional meaning of the rhythm and tune employed was brought out into perfect lucidity by the accompanying words and gestures." (p. 166). In this description, there is not categorical distinction between music, movement and the word. It is beyond the scope of this paper to consider the implications of this definition. Given the current interest in whole language learning and multiple intelligences, this suggests an interesting area of study. If there's a benefit to an integrated whole language approach to literacy, does this integration apply to musicianship or dance training? Is the division between dance and music an arbitrary one? Does such a division hinder learning?

This theoretical speculation may be of value as teachers reconsider the place of music and dance in a school's curriculum. It is also important to point out that theoretical speculation like this must have careful scholarship like the work exhibited by Broudy and Goolsby as they consider the role of music in education.

As Broudy reviews the course of music in western history, he finds arguments for and against music in schools. In the end, art is necessary for Broudy, but there is the question of levels of instruction: Who receives musical instruction? Who dispenses it? Broudy ask an import question that is even more to the point: "Can the regular classroom teacher who gives instruction in history, geography, mathematics, literature, social studies--in none of which he or she is a specialist--also give instruction in the arts, e.g. music?" (p. 25). Broudy's question is germane to anyone interested in music as a tool for language development.

Aesthetic education is the subject of a paper by Goolsby (1984). Goolsby's believes music education in the schools should be replaced with lessons in how to appreciate an aesthetic experience that involves music. Goolsby defines aesthetic experience in terms of the concepts such as object-directedness, felt freedom, detached affect, active discovery and wholeness. His article also broadens the context of the terms that must be at the heart of any discussion of music or dance and its application to studying language.

A broader definition of movement is the goal of Rafael Risemberg's (1996) unpublished dissertation on the use of mime to develop creative writing in students. Risemberg would like his definition of dramatic play to be viewed in the same light as the symbolic play defined by Vygotsky (1978), Bruner (1984) and Pellegrini (1985). Risemberg contends that mime is a form of symbolic play. He suggests written language is a partial product of symbolic play, like mime. Risemberg follows his theoretical justification with the details of his own work in New York City schools. As qualitative research in the form of ethnographic field notes, his article contains a limited perspective: he cites mainly samples of student writing. The article is most useful as an example of an

educator's attempt to expand the definition of movement and blur the distinctions between an art like pantomime and the subject area of language. It also introduces the idea that pantomimes may have a possible effect on a child's ability to grasp the sequential elements of a story.

A long term study of symbolic play and the development of language serve as the subject of an article by Pellegrini and Galda's (1983). The title of this paper will certainly attract the attention of anyone looking for a longitudinal study on symbolic play and literacy research, but this is not a long term survey, unfortunately. Instead, it is a review of research in the field of symbolic play and literacy over a ten year period. This document contrasts Piaget's theoretical orientation with Vygotsky's insights into learning. It describes their similarities and differences at length and includes an exceptionally long bibliography for anyone interested in the studies related to symbolic play as defined by Vygotsky or Piaget. The paper stresses the importance of theoretical clarity and notes the effectiveness of "ontogenetic" approaches to the study of symbolic play and literacy development.

This article also describes several experimental studies of children. The authors find experimental studies a flawed approach and note that it is difficult to distinguish between behavior that is play and behavior that is not play. Instead, behaviors fall along a continuum from very playful to less playful.

The idea of a continuum found in this insightful work reveals an idea of interest to the scope of the present review. Do the behaviors associated with music and movement fall on a continuum? Are there activities associated with learning language on a continuum that relates to music or movement? Certainly, there is very musical language and not so musical language--do some of the exercises a child does to learn a language more or less musical? Is the relationship of creative movement and language on a continuum? These questions must be considered at a later time, but they are inspired by Pelligrini and Galda's scholarly document.

In addition, Pellegrini and Galda (1993) quote McCall (1977) as a reference to further discredit the use of experimental research in this field: "The problem with such approaches, of course, is that they often tell us about the way some variables can affect others; they may not tell us much about the ways in which these variables actually affect development" (p. 169).

This is the critical context used in the following examination of experimental research related to the current discussion. Experiments reflect the "process-product" and "teacher-effectiveness" research of many modern educators and describes the cognitive perception of language and music as parallel processes. They also assume that humans internalize through experience, the rules of language or music. These experiments follow an experimental design with a pretest-posttest and a control group. The scores in each of the experiments seem to point to a highly significant result in favor of the experimental group, following the supposition of the researcher.

Hahn's (1987) experiment supports a hypothesis that correlates music-reading skills and language reading instruction, with a focus on whole to part. She examines "whole to part" strategies while reading music or language. Children from two public schools elementary string instrument classes are separated into an experimental and control group. She notes eight matched variables in the composition of her group and three unmatched variables. The independent variable is the introduction of musical notation though a series of "road maps." The evidence of her experiment points to a correlation between reading music and reading language. In her summary, Hahn refers the reader to the linguistic theories of Noam Chomsky (1969) and musicians and linguists Bernstein (1976), Longuet-Higgins (1978) and Lerdahl and Jackendoff (1983).

Haack (1972) wants to know what is the best course of action for a music educator: Is it better to use only examples that demonstrate the characteristic style of a musical era or is it better to include some examples that go against the predominant style as a way to show contrast? Haack randomly selects subjects from a junior high school music camp and

places them in two separate classes in music appreciation. The results of the experiment suggest that it is better to use a mix of examples of musical styles. This seemed to yield better scores.

Reber and Sherrill (1982) experiment with music and dance and two groups of hearing-impaired students, aged 9-14. The experimental group receives twenty creative dance lessons spaced over a ten week period. The control group does not receive this special attention, but adheres to a normal school schedule. The evidence of this experiment points to significant improvement in originality, elaboration and total creative thinking in the experimental group. This group manifested higher scores on the Torrance test, a measure for creativity.

Neurologically challenged children are the subjects of a study undertaken by Pirtle and Seaton (1973). This team investigates the effect of music instruction for children at a residential center. The subjects included fifteen pairs of children with mental ages of six years or below as determined by the Leiter International Performance Scale or the Vineland Social Maturity Scale. The independent variable is a series of musical activities with an emphasis on listening with discrimination. The evidence of the experiment points to significant improvement in the experimental group.

Advice to the Practitioner

A number of the articles in this review offer advice to the practitioner in implementing a new language teaching technique that includes the use of music or movement. Frequently, these articles serve the educational community by providing documentation and authorization for work that practitioners enact in the field. Generally, these papers summarize a popular concept or program and then provide a brief theoretical rationale for its use. The bulk of the article consists in advice from one teacher to another. For the most part, these articles eschew any in-depth analysis of a hypothesis or classical historic research and limit the content to advice.

Campbell (1995), Burnaford (1993) and Jacobs (1991) are interested in "interdisciplinary" or "integrated curricula" programs. Campbell quotes Gardner (1991) multiple intelligence and both Campbell and Burnaford mention whole-language learning as a current trend. Burnaford organizes her recommendations under a series of strategies, one of which involves the creation of a school-wide fine arts team. Campbell dispenses advice on six essential steps to developing and evaluating an interdisciplinary project. These steps are commonplace notions about organization and evaluation such as how to select a topic and so on. Jacobs also offers guidelines on how to set up such an integrated curriculum program.

Jacobs and Borland (1986), but in this piece the interdisciplinary approach is for gifted students. This time around, the authors consider an integrated program for gifted children but the article does not deliver any qualitative or quantitative information. It is another example of a series of guidelines.

The advice offered by Aaron (1994) takes its inspiration from Piaget's theory of instruction, but this is simply a description of a musical project that encourages writing. Aaron invites students to compose a musical piece with an eye toward gaining an understanding of compositional form. He follows this compositional phase with an opportunity for students to compare the composition to a musical masterpiece and reflect on the complete process. The approach includes an opportunity for the child to compose a piece of written work in a form similar to the musical composition.

Sayre (1990) and Kim (1995) dispense advice on how to use modern dance as a tool to integrate art and language. Sayre gives a lesson plan that includes the synopsis of a book, movement objectives, materials and steps in the activity. Kim provides lesson plans organized by a core subject area and list of topics, grade levels, types of music and the dance activity itself. She also includes logistical information on classroom space, equipment, classroom management and musical selections.

Lesson plans and advice inform several articles that describe dance programs and literature or poetry. Trammell (1982) and Blatt and Cunningham (1975) note the effectiveness of movement in the study of poetry. .Morin (1987) finds an improvement in language as students explore the expressive power in dance drama. Leung (1986) uses the rhythmic patterns of tap dance as part of a language program and suggests that educators explore the rhythmic patterns found in a name or short literary phrase. The nursery rhyme of Hickory, Dickory, Dock, for example, comes to life as a child taps out each syllable and builds vocabulary and language inflection. This work is accomplished with children that exhibit communications disorders.

Children with hearing impairments are the focus of a musical instruction approach by Walczyk (1993). The article describes an "auditory trainer" device that provides vibrations to the child through a headset and allows hearing-impaired children to participate in singing lessons. Walczyk suggests that language is a tool that can be shown to serve many functions. She has used her program to break down social barriers regarding sign language, especially the unwillingness of hearing-impaired students to sing and sign.

Less inspired articles for integrating music include Volkmann's (1974) advice on exploring language and literature through classical music and Cooper's (1979) article on popular music as a creative teaching tool.

Critical Assessment of Teacher Training Projects

The related literature includes the subject of teacher training. Broudy's (1990) uses a delicate turn of phrase, but his message is blunt on the role of the teacher: he finds most elementary teachers unfit to teach music (p. 25). A more advanced form of teacher education is necessary if interdisciplinary projects involving music and dance are to become a reality in the future. Campbell (1995) quotes Leonhard as saying that, "one of the greatest fears of elementary music teachers and the profession in general is curriculum integration"

(p. 37). Campbell goes on to say that at all levels of music education, provision for curriculum integration is virtually non existent (p. 37). Burnaford (1993) portrays elementary music teachers as expressing stress and the consequences of added pressure. These teachers stretch what little time, creativity and resources they have been allotted to their subject (p.44).

The lack of information on dance in schools is of interest to Leonhard (1990). His organization, the National Arts Education Research Center, plans to document and evaluate creative movement programs that integrate dance into the core curriculum.

Kite, Smucker, Steiner and Bayne (1994) give an assessment of a teacher training course that involves listening to classical program music and writing subjective impressions. These authors note that singing and listening are easily incorporated in the general classroom, yet these areas are ignored in teacher training.

Summary and Conclusion

As a form of social interaction and expression, music and creative movement are near the heart of human language and communication. In the past, music and dance have been separated from each other and from language instruction. This review of related literature suggests that this is changing as educators in the field rethink this separation and begin to work with the powerful combination of music, creative movement and language.

The literature in this sample finds a precedent for this work in ancient Greek civilization and western history as well as the currently popular research of multiple intelligences and whole language learning.

Unfortunately, much of the literature is simplistic, offering a single prescription that is based upon the author's own field study. Too many of the samples conform to a standard format of voicing authoritative support for an interdisciplinary program. There is well-intentioned action research from teachers in the field, but too few true ethnographic studies. The researchers generously share advice. They illustrate an integrated project, but they do not analyze the positive and negative aspects of their program.

There is a lack of interest in the past or vision for the future. Too few are curious about the origins of music and creative movement, even though they use these basic forms of human expression as part of their work. As to the future, there is not longitudinal study in the literature and no author mentions a plan for such a study.

One envisions a long term study that describes in detail a working school's music, dance, and language through the eyes of children and a privileged observer. One can also envision a longitudinal study of language skills for groups that attempt to fuse music, creative movement and language, similar to Mead's (1996) discussion of Dalcroze eurythmics or the music of the Greeks described by Broudy (1990).

Humans manifest passion through music, dance and language. Passion is not abundantly apparent in the literature. Broudy (1990), Mead (1996), Pellegrini and Galda (1993) and Goolsby (1984) are the exceptions. These authors define important terms, follow up initial questions with research and add insights that spark new thoughts. Broudy concludes his article with a brief assessment of what is needed in the future if music education is to be a part of general education. His recommends teacher training in aesthetic theory, an alphabet of aesthetic literacy and a resolve on the part of teachers and students to consider art history. He asks who may or may not deserve an aesthetic education? It is also Broudy who suggest that music may manifest appropriate values for children.

After reading the sample, one might ask, "Is there no disagreement on this issue?" No author questions conventional wisdom about the place of music in the school, with the exception of Broudy and Goolsby. What is the value of music in a utilitarian society? Does music belong in elementary school and why? Should educators mix and match music and language, dance and language or music and dance and language? What is the value of performing art in preparing students to function in society? Unfortunately, this review of related literature does not answer these questions satisfactorily.

One might also read between the lines of these articles and add that teachers who dare to teach music or dance must exhibit its passion as they pursue their other subjects. He or she who dares to employ music and creative movement in pedagogy should understand the power of these ancient forms of human expression.

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